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# Devotional Companion

TO

THE PULPIT

*FOR THE USE OF MINISTERS OF  
CHRIST.*



LONDON :  
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.  
1894.



## PREFACE.

This little volume does not profess to deal with Sacred Eloquence, nor with the detailed methods and rules of the composition of a Sermon, which are abundantly provided in many excellent treatises on Pastoral Theology; its aim is to set down a few general principles, practical suggestions, and devotional exercises, which the author has found helpful to himself.

Sometimes the thought is only

suggested, and it is left to the reader to work out the thought for himself.

Much will be found more particularly applicable to preaching without a written manuscript.

It presents a standard to be aimed at, of which as much may be realized, especially in regard to retirement, as is possible and practicable, under the respective circumstances of each individual.

It may be used at intervals, once in three months, or more often ; but so that the thoughts and language do not, by becoming too familiar, lose their force.

It may serve as a guide for the younger clergy ; and may sometimes be a helpful reminder to those of more mature age.

Part II. contains a few, appropriate extracts which it may be found helpful to read from time to time.

May the good pleasure of the Great Shepherd graciously vouchsafe to bless this little manual, to the assistance of some of my brethren, and to the greater glory of God.

## NOTE.

*The author would gratefully receive, through his publisher, any criticisms which, as the result of the practical use of this little manual, could suggest alterations or omissions of any words or parts.*

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE SUBJECT OF THE SERMON.

1. **N**othing can relieve you of the obligation to *teach*; no fervour, no warmth of exhortation can compensate for the lack of spiritual wisdom and sound doctrine.
2. **Y**our function is to distribute the **b**read of Life, to supply food for the soul.
  - This food should be not speculative fancies, nor intellectual niceties, nor theological rarities, but that which is simple, wholesome, and nourishing.

4      *The Subject of the Sermon.*

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3. The food must include milk for the babes, and strong meat for the mature.

4. Let your subject not deal merely or mainly with what is secular, philanthropic and altruistic, moral and philosophical; let it not set forth merely or mainly the favourite doctrines of a party, or of an individual: but let your teaching be religious, Christian, spiritual, and practical.

5. Keep ever to the front the distinctive doctrines of Christianity, the need and helplessness of man, the Person and work of Christ.

‘I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.’

6. Break up the fallow ground by preaching Repentance.

It is premature and in vain to attempt to lead on to perfection, to

build up a godly life and conversation, dogmatic knowledge or churchmanship, until the lesson of Repentance has been fully learned.

It is to be feared that it is often the habitual commission of what is known and felt to be sin in private life, in trade and business, which, while allowing persons to come to church, does not allow them to partake of the Holy Communion, and effectually prevents them from making any progress in the spiritual life.

John Baptist must precede Christ.

Convince of sin ; the general sinfulness of man before God ; the sin of the age and the hour, of the class and the individual ; in courage and in love ; in the spirit of the surgeon, who cuts and cuts deeply, that he may heal.

7. Lay firm and well the one foundation-stone of the Person and work of Christ : as the Revelation of

6      *The Subject of the Sermon.*

the unseen God ; as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world ; as the Life of the world by His Incarnation and Resurrection ; as the Light of the world, by His Teaching and Example ; as the High Priest by His Atonement and Intercession.

8. **G**ive full prominence to the work of the Holy Ghost ; Regenerating, Illuminating, Renewing, Sanctifying, Perfecting, Glorifying.
9. **S**et forth soberly, rightly, and in due proportion the means of Grace ; Prayer, the Word of God, and the Sacraments ; show their nature, necessity, and use.
10. **B**uild up the Life of Penitence, Love and Service.

*PREPARATION.*



## CHAPTER II.

### PREPARATION.

11. **K**now your subject so well, that you lose yourself in it, and that you may not be exposed to a sense of weakness, by a consciousness that you have not done your best in the way of preparation.

12. **L**et the treatment of your subject be simple; saints and sinners will be satisfied with simplicity: you are not required to satisfy itching ears.

Let the sermon be short rather than long.

Let it be definite. Each sermon should have its main object and purpose, to teach some doctrine, to rebuke some sin, to impart some grace, or to inculcate some Christian duty.

Let it be direct.

Let it be felt that your teaching is not only that which you have obtained second-hand from books, and human teachers, but that which is the result of personal and independent thought and meditation, and has stood the test of your own personal experience.

### 13. Prepare yourself.

The efficacy of the sword is dependent, not so much upon its sharpness of point, or keenness of edge; still less upon its burnished brightness, or jewelled hilt; as upon the vital force and energy of him who wields it.

The effective spiritual vital force

of the preacher is to be derived, not from books, nor from intellectual ability or culture, nor from mastery of the art or artifice of human oratory; nor from inward excitement or outward stimulant; but from the indwelling Presence of God, transforming and transfiguring the whole man, and filling him with the Power of God.

This power is only communicated to him who has overcome the world, has died to himself, has crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts, and lives and abides in God.

This power is communicated and received, less or more, according to the degree of self-surrender and union with God; until in those, in whom the self surrender and union are the highest and most complete, the power becomes astonishing, and truly supernatural and miraculous in its efficacy and results.

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14. This preparation is the work  
not of minutes, nor of hours,  
but of years, of a life.
15. Such a preparation presupposes  
a Vocation. ‘Come ye after  
Me, and I will make you to become  
fishers of men.’
16. Such a preparation presupposes  
Consent; to rise up, leave  
all, and follow Christ; to forego the  
pursuit of the world, the flesh, and  
the devil.

Surrender yourself, your whole self, without reserve; your heart, your energies, your time, your strength; to Christ and His work.

Resolve to make the work of winning souls the first supreme and paramount object in life; to make all other occupations and acts subordinate and subservient to this; and to let this single object give its

colour and character to all other occupations and acts.

17. Such a preparation involves and demands long - continued training and discipline.

As the athlete and the painter, so the preacher must first have special qualifications given him by God, and then must cultivate and develop them to the utmost, by careful and patient discipline and training.

This discipline and training cannot be begun too soon; must grow continually without a break, and must never be deemed to be outgrown, or to have become no longer necessary.

18. Yield yourself to be trained by Christ.

Make Him your ideal and your model. Make yourself intimately acquainted with Him, not in so-called lives or books of devotion,

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but in the Gospels, read and pondered in the most minute detail.

Set apart a certain space every day, if possible in the early morning, for such a living study of the character and life of Christ. • Regard the time and thought devoted to this purpose as productive of the most real and lasting results, as affording the keenest spiritual enjoyment and peace, and supplying the greatest spiritual power and strength.

It is marvellous how much of vivid reality and suggestive thought the Gospels will afford to patient and prolonged study. They are not only inspired, they are inspiring.

Study the Gospels in the spirit in which they were written. Seek the aid of the Holy Spirit. Pray unto Christ to send the Spirit unto you, that He may bring all things to your remembrance; that He may take of the things of Christ, and show

them unto you ; that He may open the eyes and develop the powers of your imagination ; that He may illumine your understanding, enflame your heart with fire of love, and enable you verily and indeed to behold Christ living and moving in the flesh before you.

Carry the picture which you have thus seen away with you ; let it be before your eyes throughout the day.

Live in continual companionship with Christ, after the manner of the twelve ; walking with Him, hearing His words and the tone of His voice, observing His secret life of communion with God, and His active life of love and mercy ; feeling yourself known through and through by Him, being counselled by Him, rebuked by Him, ordered and guided in your daily work by Him.

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Observe and note the classes of people whom Christ chiefly addresses, the subjects on which He mostly treats, and the spirit, manner and tone in which He always speaks in private and in public."

Let this companionship with Christ have its natural effect and influence upon you, gradually bringing your life and character into conformity and likeness to Him.

Be awed and solemnized by His presence, sobered by His sorrow, humbled by His meekness, touched by His love, fired by His zeal, emboldened by His fearless courage, strengthened by His immovable calm.

19. *R*eceive the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Christ, the special unction for your office and work, which He supplies and offers to those whom He calls.

*Take the powers which He gives you. Appropriate them, and use them to the utmost, with a humble recognition of the honour conferred upon you, of the trust committed to you, and of the account you will have to give.*

20. *L*et your daily manner of life be such as to fit your body, mind, and spirit to be ready recipients and vehicles of the motions of the Spirit.

Close the camera of your mind as much as possible against foreign light, that the image of Christ alone may be impressed upon your spirit, full, and sharp, and clear.

. Do not yield to the influences and allurements of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and so weaken your powers. •Remember Ai, Samson, and Saul.

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21. If it be necessary for you to work for your livelihood after the manner of The Carpenter and the tent-maker, beware lest the cares of this world engross your thoughts, exhaust your energies, secularize your spirit, and cause you to forget the one thing needful.

Do what you have to do in God and for God. Let it be your ambition to be felt and known to be in secular matters, not so much a good man of business as a man of God.

In the midst of secular occupations cultivate self-possession, self-recollection, detachment, immutability, calm. Anchor your soul in God. Let none of these things move you.

Let not secular things impart their spirit to spiritual things, but let spiritual things impart their spirit to secular things.

22. Practise habitually temperance, and from time to time, so far as may be found profitable and necessary, mortification, abstinence, and fasting, that, the flesh being subdued to the spirit, you may ever obey the motions of God's Holy Spirit in righteousness and true holiness. 'I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.'

Accept as the most effective and useful discipline the discipline which your Lord provides for you day by day, in the duties required of you, and the cross laid upon you.

23. Above all, cast out the spirit of self, that you may become filled with the Spirit of Christ.

Die to self, self-pleasing, self-indulgence, self-confidence, self-adulation, self-satisfaction, self-advertisement, self-seeking, self-advancement.

Live in Christ, and Christ in you.

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Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; lowliness, meekness, humility, love, gentleness, and compassion; poverty in spirit, habits and manner of life; unworldliness, and heavenly mindedness; submission, obedience, and patience.

Have fellowship with His sufferings. Be content to be with Him despised and rejected, misunderstood, misrepresented, forsaken, insulted, condemned, scourged, and crucified.

Esteem it the highest distinction that the stigmata of your crucified Lord should have their slightest likeness and reproduction in yourself.

Endeavour to manifest the meekness and patience of Christ, 'Who when He was reviled, reviled not again'; the spirituality of Christ, 'My kingdom is not of this world,

else would My servants fight.' 'Thinkest thou that I could not now pray to My Father,' and He would presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels?' 'Overcome evil with good.'

Live for Christ, to feed His lambs and His sheep, to continue His work.

24. **O**n each occasion before preaching, avoid over-fatigue of body or mind, care and preoccupation, hurry and excitement.

25. **R**egard it as of the very greatest possible assistance, if not absolutely indispensable, to secure Saturday evening for spiritual preparation. There is a deep psychological reason for the practice of the Jews, the ancient British Christians, and the modern Lutherans, in making Sunday begin on Saturday evening.

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Secure, as far as possible and practicable, without neglecting other duties equally or more important, retirement, silence and calm, for meditation and prayer.

It is to be regretted that sometimes the clergy, when they invite others to preach for them, especially at Advent and Lent, in mistaken kindness and hospitality, by conversation and by asking in friends to meet the preacher, restrict his opportunity for prayer and meditation, occupy his mind with matters of social, religious, or political gossip, depriving it of its freshness, and of its spiritual power, and so lessen the power and effect of the Word of God in his mouth.

In such circumstances the preacher must be on his guard against effusiveness in conversation; he must endeavour to preserve self-recollectedness, retirement in his own heart,

detachment from surroundings, and constant communion with God.

26. **M**editation.

Endeavour to take an adequate view of the importance of the occasion.

Contemplate the various conditions and attitudes of your hearers. Some are hungering and thirsting for the bread and water of life: some are coming, like Nicodemus, secretly to see and test, and judge for themselves; some like the woman with an issue of blood; some like Mary Magdalene; some like the prodigal son; and others are waiting for the voice of love and power which is to raise them from the death of sin to the life of righteousness.

Think of the issues at stake: a soul lost or saved for eternity. Let the eye of your imagination dwell at

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length upon, and seek to penetrate the awful and profound depths involved in these words, soul, lost, saved, eternity. Think of the momentous issues, as affecting the soul of the hearer, Christ, yourself. Think of the importance of the opportunity ; perhaps the critical one, or the last one for some hearer. Think of the greatness and difficulty of the work, to catch men; to overcome the resistance of the will, to convince of sin, to cast out devils, to raise the dead.

27. **R**ecognise and fully realize your own utter insufficiency to do any of these things of yourself. Depend wholly upon God for sufficiency and strength. As the end in view is supernatural, so the means employed must be supernatural also.

Put on not Saul's armour of human

argument and eloquence, but the panoply of God.

28. **P**rayer.

Pray then, and that most earnestly, for the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon yourself, for παρησίᾳ; for the tongue of fire, ‘That I may open my mouth to speak boldly as I ought to speak’; for δύναμις; ‘Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.’ ‘Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.’ ‘My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power.’

Pray for the outpouring of the same Spirit upon your audience. ‘This kind goeth not out but by prayer.’ ‘Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended to the things that were spoken.’

29. **Faith.**

‘Be strong in faith, that while you of yourself can do nothing, yet the power of God within you can work miracles, and that to it and with it nothing is impossible.

‘If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Be thou plucked up, and be thou cast into the sea; and it shall obey you.’

‘Greater things than these shall ye do, because I go unto the Father.’

‘The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.’

‘The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.’

‘The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.’

‘The gates of hell shall not prevail.’

Remember Jericho, Gideon, David.

30. Use caution and judgment as to the extent to which, and the spirit in which, you take part in the external machinery and management of the Sunday-school.

See that you do not use up beforehand the physical energies which will be needed for the service and the sermon; that you do not allow your temper to be ruffled, or your spirit to be withdrawn from communion with God. •

At the same time, you may safely, wisely, and profitably make it an opportunity to feed, develop, exercise, and manifest spiritual tenderness, love and compassion, attraction, power, and influence.

And you may endeavour to move among teachers and children as Christ would; by manner, bearing, and countenance, silently solemnizing, elevating, and attracting to heavenly things.

31. On your way to church, though not neglecting to greet any whom you may meet in the spirit of fullest friendliness and love, be on your guard against frivolity of conversation, especially against discussing matters of parochial business.

32. In the vestry, let not 'care and trouble about many things' withdraw the eye of the soul from God.

Especially avoid anything in the nature of sharp reprimand or altercation. As much as possible maintain silence, self-recollectedness, and inward communion with God.

33. The spiritual sight and touch of the preacher are matters as delicate and easily disordered and injured, and require as watchful and self-denying care, as the voice of a great singer.

At the same time the more deeply the spirituality of the preacher is rooted in Christ, the less liable is it to be shaken or uprooted by the rough winds of distraction, temptation, or excitement.



*THE CHURCH.*



## CHAPTER III.

### THE CHURCH.

34. Let the preparation of the Sermon be completed before you enter the Church. Then dismiss it from your mind as much as possible.

35. Put yourself in the presence of God, of Christ glorified, and of the holy angels. Throw your whole mind and spirit into the service, and offer your own confession, prayer, and praise.

36. Let the sight of the congregation overwhelm you with a profound sense of your personal un-

worthiness and weakness. But let it also fan into a flame the fire of love which has been already kindled. Let your eye rest upon the people from time to time, in the spirit, not of anxious timidity, nor of ambitious pride, but of spiritual love and tenderness, eager and zealous to do them good, to rescue and deliver them from slavery to the world, the flesh and the devil, to bring them into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Let this rod swallow up all the rest.

37. If little contretemps occur, if you are led to make a mistake, to forget something, to remember that something has been forgotten, to notice a mistake made by others, that the service is going wrong, that some official is showing incapacity, wilfulness, or temper; that someone is behaving badly,

or is manifesting dislike to, or contempt of, yourself, by which you are in danger of being disturbed, or distracted, or vexed ; regard this as an interruption caused by the devil, an offence designedly placed in your path by him, to trip you up suddenly when off your guard, to raise a little tempest in your breast, to draw you from Christ, and strip you of your spiritual power. Be not ignorant of his devices. With a strong effort of faith, throw the anxiety off you. Refuse to be disturbed.. Take refuge in Christ. Shut yourself in Him, and in Him recover confidence and calm.



*THE PULPIT.*



## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PULPIT.

38. Take Christ with you into the Pulpit. Before you leave your place ask Him to go before you. Follow Him into the pulpit, and keep your eyes fixed on Him as you go.

39. In going to and entering the Pulpit, avoid an attitude and manner which breathe studied dignity or solemnity, or self-conscious thought of the eyes of the congregation fixed upon you. Rather let your manner breathe humility, simplicity, love and

gladness, as become the better of Good Tidings. ‘ How Beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings of peace.’

40. In your prayer ask Christ to be with you, to abide in you, to give you His spirit, to keep off the devil, to guide you, to speak through you. Yield yourself to Him. Trust in Him. Lose and forget yourself in Him.

Every now and then pause in your Sermon ; realize His presence, and renew your strength in Him.

41. Do not allow yourself to be affected by the nature of the audience, as to numbers, social or educational character, or as to the presence or absence of particular persons.

Know none after the flesh. Accustom yourself to regard those who are friends and acquaintances, and even relatives after the flesh, as no longer so, but only as sinners with souls to be saved and edified.

42. Address yourself to the individual.

See before you not a mass, with a corporate personality of its own greater than that of the greatest of the individuals composing it, but individuals, each with his own personality, that and no more.

Address yourself to not an impersonal mass, but individuals, of whom each personality is separate and distinct, and must be severally and individually got at, moved, convinced, and permanently influenced.

Conceive yourself sometimes as speaking only to a single individual, in whom you are personally, deeply,

and affectionately interested, dealing directly between him and you alone, yearning over him, pleading with him, pressing him home, persuading him, bringing all your love and tact and power to bear upon him, eager to win him for Christ.

Aim at the conversion and building up of individuals, which is perhaps more easily effected when the congregation is small than when it is large.

43. **D**o not mistake the excitement which arises from the presence of masses of men for the unction which descends from the Spirit of God.

*'DELIVÈRT.'*



## CHAPTER V.

### DELIVERY.

44. **A**im at Conviction.  
• Do not aim at oratory. Avoid, and even conceal and repress, a practised fluency and ease of utterance, a self-confident delivery, a professional command of gesture, as calculated to actually diminish the spiritual effect.
45. **A**im at diverting the attention of your hearers from yourself, your natural powers of voice, language, gesture, talents, or learning; remembering that just in so far as the atten-

tion of the hearer is given to either or any of these, so it is withdrawn from those things to which it should be your object to direct it. Aim, therefore, at concentrating it upon Christ and His salvation for sinners, upon your message of warning, invitation, and pardon; and that not as a message of your own, but as one given you by Christ, which you at your soul's peril must deliver.

46. **A**ddress and seek to reach and penetrate not only curiosity, interest, taste, intellect or emotions, but conscience and spirit.

Let the word of God be quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Aim not only at preaching a

sermon, but at producing a practical result in your hearer. Regard your sermon not as an end, but as a means. A sermon may be a finished production of art, and may draw congregations, and win applause; but if it does not lead to action in the hearer, it is from the point of view of Christianity a complete and melancholy failure, enough to make angels weep. The object must be not to evoke the language of admiration and applause, 'What a magnificent sermon!' or 'What a finished orator!' but the enthusiastic resolution and cry, 'Up, let us fight against Philip!' or 'What shall I do to be saved?'

47. The effect depends almost entirely upon the delivery.

Remember the importance of *actio* as the first, second, and third prerequisite in the orator; which is

the outward expression and manifestation, by whatever means, of inward feeling.

Remember that unconsciously and unawares to yourself, and even in spite of efforts at concealment, your outward manner and tone of address reveal and manifest the presence or absence within of true Christian and ministerial character and feeling.

Remember that the effect of your sermon upon the hearts and consciences of your hearers depends not so much upon your subject, treatment, arguments, or language, as upon the subtle flavour and taste of real genuine Christliness, spirituality, and divine unction and power, which are imparted to them by your whole bearing, manner, and tone of voice.

These influences, when present in sincerity, simplicity, and truth, are of almost irresistible power; they dis-

arm criticism, compel attention, take forcible possession of your audience, and bring them meek and humble into the awful and immediate presence of God, Christ, and eternity.

‘He spake as one having authority, and not as the scribes.’

‘They could not resist the wisdom and power with which he (Stephen) spake.’

48. Your delivery must above all be characterized by Love. There must be no coldness, stiffness, stateliness, or reserve; no severity, roughness, harshness, or asperity; no lecturing, scolding, laying down the law, from a platform of Pharisaic or magisterial superiority, still less of human irritation and anger; but love and sympathy, real and genuine, strong and inexhaustible; gentleness, tenderness, compassion, pitifulness; pleading, imploring, entreating; even

with tears, the greatest gift of God, given only to the greatest saints and the greatest preachers, ‘the blood of the soul’ (Aug.).

49. Endeavour to stretch invisible wires of sympathy between your heart and the hearts of your audience, to establish ‘rapport’ and touch between you and them, by means of not so much words and thoughts, as manner and tone; and let an electric stream of love flow continuously from you to them.

50. This love to be effectual must be real and genuine. Your manner and tone must be the spontaneous outflow of the abundance of the heart. Your heart must be on fire, melting with love.

Do not attempt to simulate love. It is impossible to maintain the deception. Sooner or later the audience will detect the imposture; you

will hopelessly forfeit their respect, and they will loathe your maudlin sentimentality even to nausea. Your audience must *feel* that the love is *there*.

Do not let your outward manifestation of love be in advance of your real inward feeling. Rather your audience must feel that so far from forcing yourself to manifest love, you are even checking and repressing its manifestation, and that there is very much more love in your heart than you allow to appear.

51. **M**anifest and exert this love, not primarily and intentionally, that you may win acceptance for yourself, that you may attach men to yourself, and obtain a personal influence over them ; but whether you are loved or not, love them for their own sakes, for the sake of Christ, with Christlike, Godlike love.

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52. Do not only seek this attitude of mind and spirit at the time of preaching. It cannot be assumed or acquired in a moment. Cultivate, form and develop the *habit* of love and sympathy at all times, day by day, in the ordinary course of life: with your children, servants and friends; in the street, the cottage, the school, the hospital, the prison, society, with all, and everywhere.

53. Cultivate, form and develop spiritual love, spiritual tenderness, pitifulness, and compassion for precious and perishing souls.

Train and accustom yourself to see the world as Christ sees it, under the desolating tyranny and degrading influence of sin; the spiritual misery of many; their spiritual poverty, destitution, nakedness, and starvation; their arrested

development and stunted growth; their emaciated forms, and hideous and loathsome diseases; their uselessness and harmfulness to the kingdom of God; their approaching speedy and awful end.

54. **L**earn like Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, to yearn with bowels of compassion, to save them from death, to lift them out of their misery, to strike the rock and give them the water of life, to lift up the Son of Man upon the cross before them, to put on incense and rush in between the living and the dead, to give them the bread of life, to clothe them with the garments of salvation, and to make them to abound in spiritual health, strength, riches, joy, and peace.

55. **B**e willing, like Christ, to lay down your life for the sheep, to submit to any sacrifice, condescen-

sion, humiliation, labour and suffering for their sake.

Be willing, like S. Paul, in the overflowing abundance of your compassion and love, to be accursed from Christ for your brethren's sake.

56. **D**rink a deep draught of the love of Christ. Think of the breadth and length and depth and height of the love of Christ, who, being in the form of God, became flesh and dwelt among us, though rich, yet for our sakes became poor, who humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 'Greater love hath no man than this.'

57. **T**hink of the expression on the countenance of Christ, the marvellous and fascinating power of His look, His manner and tone of voice, when He said to Andrew and Philip, James and John and

Matthew, ‘Follow Me,’ and they rose up and followed Him; when He said, ‘Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden;’ when He said, ‘Suffer little children to come unto Me;’ when He looked on the retreating form of the young ruler, and loved him; when He said, ‘Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more;’ when He wept over Jerusalem; when He turned and looked on Peter.

58. Then go and represent Christ,  
the spirit and the love of  
Christ, in your thoughts and feelings,  
in your words, look, tone of voice,  
and manner.

This is the sum of the matter,

PREACH CHRIST IN THE SPIRIT  
OF CHRIST.

59. Thus felt and thus preached  
Jeremiah: ‘~~Ob~~ that my  
head were waters, and mine eyes a

fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people.' S. Paul : ' Remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone day and night with tears ; ' Many walk, of whom I have told you before, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ ; ' God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ ; ' My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Jesus Christ be formed in you ; ' Out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears, not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.'

Thus felt and preached S. Francis d'Assisi, S. Francis de Sales, S. Vincent de Paul, Whitfield, the Curé d'Ars.

*AFTER DELIVERY.*



## CHAPTER VI.

### AFTER DELIVERY.

60. Confess shortcomings, mistakes, omissions, failures; not as dishonouring you, but as dishonouring Christ.

Thank Christ for His presence and help. *Non nobis, Domine!* Remember Herod, who 'gave not God the glory.'

61. Do not let your thoughts busy themselves with the result of the sermon, or speculate as to its possible or probable effect.

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Dismiss it as much as possible from your mind. Reflect that its real value and effect depend not on visible things, upon apparent success or failure, but upon the good pleasure and effectual working of the Spirit of God. Hand it over to Christ, in prayer and faith that He will bless it.

‘Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that now goeth on his way weeping, and beareth forth good seed, shall doubtless come again with joy, and bring his sheaves with him.’

62. Do not think over the sermon with self-satisfied approval; do not be on the watch for compliments from friends and newspapers; feel and manifest dislike and dread of them.

63. Do not be disturbed by adverse criticism, or by resentment manifested towards you. Prefer it very much to praise and popularity. Thankfully welcome the knife which prunes off the gross shoots of self-adulation.

64. Convert the adverse criticism to your profit and advantage. To effect which search for and discover its cause.

Occasionally, but very rarely, it will be the interested opposition of those who make silver shrines for Diana, or of those who see that 'the hope of their gains is gone;' or the hostility of the proud and prejudiced Pharisee; or the stubborn resistance and angry resentment of the hardened sinner. In such cases, rejoice to be counted worthy to share the reproach of Christ. Be patient. Overcome evil with Good.

Frequently it will be the fastidious taste of worldly intellectualism and languid fashion, of those who murmur at the sameness and simplicity of the manna, saying, ‘Our soul loatheth this light food.’ Such you must seek not to conciliate, but to convert; not to please, but to alarm and awaken.

65. More often it will be because you have contracted some unfortunate trick of utterance or gesture, because you have not cultivated and trained your voice, or not sufficiently studied your subject, so as to be able to present it to your hearers clearly and profitably.

Most often it will be because you have approached the hearer in the spirit and power of man, rather than in the spirit and power of God; or because you have some defect of external manner and tone of voice, which infallibly betrays some defect

of character within ; a deficiency in sincerity, humility, or love.

Go back to your self-preparation, discipline, and training. Lay aside the sin which so easily besets you. Search for the Babylonish garment. Put off Saul's armour. Study more carefully, and imitate more perfectly the model of Christ's character. Fan the flames of your divine love and compassion. Pray more, and if need be, fast more. Then let down your net again for a draught.

66. Do not be discouraged by a poor performance, by failure to reach your ideal.

Remember that 'God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty ; and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea,

and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.'

Be content to be among your people 'in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.'

67. **N**ever be content and satisfied with that whereunto you have attained. Be always pressing forward, daily endeavouring to develop more and more your capacity for receiving the power of God, your spiritual love, compassion, and zeal, your power of reaching, moving, and saving souls.

68. **A**s you count the tens and hundreds who are in your church, remember the hundreds and thousands who are not there.

Be not satisfied with what has been done; think of what is still undone.

Remember those in the highways and hedges, wandering on the mountains, the publicans and sinners, whom Christ came to call. Them also you must bring. Go and seek them, from house to house, from village to village, in season and out of season, compel them to come in ; that their blood may not be required at your hand, and that the house of God may be full.

69. **A**pply the sermon to yourself.

See that you at any rate do not forget it, that you strive to profit by it, and to translate it into act.

‘Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name ? and in Thy name cast out devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works ? And then will I profess unto them, I

never knew you ; depart from Me,  
ye that work iniquity.'

'I keep under my body and bring  
it into subjection, lest that by any  
means when I have preached to  
others I myself should be a cast-  
away.'

## PART II

### *EXTRACTS.*



A SERMON.

RUSKIN.

There are two ways of regarding a sermon, either as a human composition, or a Divine message. If we look upon it entirely as the first, and require our clergymen to finish with their utmost care and learning, for our better delight whether of ear or intellect, we shall nevertheless be led to expect much formality and stateliness in its delivery, and to think that all is not well if the pulpit have not a golden fringe round it, and a goodly cushion in front of it, and if the sermon be

not fairly written in a black book, to be smoothed upon the cushion in a majestic manner before beginning; all this we should duly come to expect; but we shall at the same time consider the treatise thus prepared, as something to which it is our duty to listen without restlessness for half an hour or three quarters, but which, when that duty has been decorously performed, we may dismiss from our minds in happy confidence of being provided with another when next it shall be necessary. But if once we begin to regard the preacher, whatever his faults, as a man sent with a message to us, which it is a matter of life or death whether we hear or refuse; if we look upon him as set in charge over many spirits in danger of ruin; and having allowed to him but an hour or two in the seven days to speak to them; if we make some

endeavour to conceive how precious these hours ought to be to him, a small vantage on the side of God after his flock have been exposed for six days together to the full weight of the world's temptation, and he has been forced to watch the thorn and the thistle springing in their hearts, and to see what wheat had been scattered there, snatched from the wayside by this wild bird and the other, and at last, when breathless and weary with the week's labour they give him this interval of imperfect and languid hearing, he has but thirty minutes to get at the separate hearts of a thousand men, to convince them of all their weaknesses, to shame them for all their sins, to warn them of all their dangers, to try by this way and that to stir the hard fastenings of those doors where the Master Himself has stood and knocked, yet

none opened, and to call at the openings of those dark streets where Wisdom herself hath stretched forth her hands and no man regarded—thirty minutes to raise the dead in! Let us but once understand and feel this, and we shall look with changed eyes upon that frippery of gay furniture about the place from which the message of judgment must be delivered, which either breathes upon the dry bones that they may live, or, if ineffectual, remains recorded in condemnation, perhaps against the utterer and listener alike, but assuredly against one of them. We shall not so easily bear with the silk and gold upon the seat of judgment, nor with ornament of oratory in the mouth of the messenger; we shall wish that his words may be simple, even when they are sweetest, and the place from which he speaks like a marble rock in the desert,

about which the people have gathered in their thirst.—‘ Stones of Venice,’ vol. ii., pp. 23, 24.

## SUBJECTS.

BISHOP WILSON.

It is too often that preachers perplex those whom they should instruct, either by proving things that want no proof—the being of a God, etc.—or by proposing useless questions and doubts; or speaking of things above the capacities of the common people. There is a great deal of difference betwixt people admiring a preacher, and being edified by his sermons.—‘ Sacra Privata,’ p. 235.

## THE ELOQUENCE OF JESUS.

BISHOP WILSON.

Can any man imitate a greater master of eloquence than Jesus Christ was, whose great excellence

appears in making great truths understood by the meanest capacity?—  
'Sacra Privata,' p. 234.

## SERMONS.

S. FRANCIS DE SALES.

S. Francis heard it said of a Preacher, that his discourses consisted of nothing but flowers and perfumes, and were full of literary beauties which attracted all listeners, as the bees which fly to sugar and honey.

On which he remarked, 'I am waiting and wondering, *an flores fructus parturiant*,' and advised the preacher to prune his vine of the superfluous shoots of belles-lettres; *tempus putationis advenit*; to cut off and prune away so many strange ornaments. 'Although it was commendable to employ the vases of the Egyptians in the service of the

tabernacle, still this must be done soberly: the interpretation of the Gospel ought to be suitable to its style and simplicity; it was not necessary either to powder or to rouge the cheeks of such a thing as Theology; and we must be even more careful not to deface the Word of God than the public coinage.—‘L’Esprit,’ t. i., p. 109.

## LONG SERMONS.

VINCENT DE PAUL.

After having spent much strength and labour to little purpose, I was one day lamenting before God, as I walked to church, the little fruits of my exertions. As I went along I was overtaken by a vine-dresser, who was also going the same way. I took an opportunity of asking him how the missions were liked. ‘Sir,’ replied the peasant,

'we all feel obliged to you for your kind intentions; we are all likewise sensible that everything you tell us is good, but you preach too long; we ignorant boors are just like our own wine-vats—the juice must have plenty of room left to work; and, once filled to the brim, if you attempt to pour in more, even if it were the very best juice in the world, it will only be spilt on the ground and lost.'

#### PRAYER AND SACRIFICE.

The two great attributes of the priest are prayer and sacrifice. To draw souls to him, to penetrate them and transform them at the fire of his love, to enable sinners the more easily to confess their most humiliating sins, to inspire them with the will, and to enable them to recover the great and supernatural

power to act as Christians, the Curé d'Ars had not only to exhort, he had to pray and to offer himself as a sacrifice. The disciple needed, as the master, to offer himself as a whole burnt offering, to give to the fullest extent of his saintly life, in order that that exuberant sap instilled into faded souls might restore in them the circulation of light and love. Whatever the cross touches it fertilizes. There is the secret of those long self-sacrifices, voluntary and cherished, which we have spoken of. In this age of feeble understanding, and more feeble courage, the world does not know that a great heart does not come to a standstill in love, and that love without measure produces sacrifice. The power to love is here below nothing else than the power to suffer. Moreover, our Lord often comes to the aid of His apostles, in this thirst

of sufferings, by adding thereto an increase of most holy sorrows, though they be very bitter and very piercing, which come directly from Him. The greater part of souls remain closed to other souls, if they have not known sorrow. It is sorrow which bruises them and causes them to spread forth in waves of benevolence and love.—‘Monnin, *Le Curé d’Ars*,’ ii., 260.

#### THE PAINTER’S DISCIPLINE.

CENNINO CENNINI.

Love, Fear, Obedience and Perseverance ought to be the Cardinal virtues of the Artist, to be worn as a robe of grace and honour in the presence of the master under whom he places himself. His master should be the best living artist, he should divide his allegiance with no one else; he should continually copy from his works, as well as from the

living models of Nature, confident that, unless his intellect be gross indeed, he will acquire something at least of his master's manner, while, if Nature has endowed him with a *punta di fantasia*, a spark of genius, he will ultimately create a new and original one, the hand and mind naturally refusing to gather thorns after spending their time in culling roses. During this period of discipline his life should be regular and temperate, like that of students in theology or philosophy, his food light, and taken twice only in the day, and with little wine; his walks solitary, unless a congenial soul be his companion, and he should abstain from violent exercises, such as hurling the stone, the bar of iron, etc., which render the hand heavy and sluggish in responding to the mind, as well as from sensual indulgences of the grosser kind, which render it

'lighter, fleeter, and more ungovernable than the leaf before the wind.'

—'Trattura della Pittura.'

### CONVERSION.

I do not know who it is who said that for him who loves God truly there is only one verb in all languages, *convert*, and only one substantive, *conversion*. Moreover it is to the conversion of sinners that all saints have devoted themselves. It was the end towards which all the thoughts of the Curé d'Ars converged, and the work in which he spent all his time and all his strength.—'Monnin, Le Curé d'Ars,' ii., 191.

### POWER OF RAISING THE DEAD.

#### GRATRY.

I have sometimes imagined this state of the soul when it seems that one has the power to raise all

souls from the dead by an irresistible fire which is carried within. O God, to find by the roadside one of Thy most beautiful creatures left for dead, or sunk in invincible and mortal sleep; to perceive suddenly on the ground that inanimate body, and in that body, as it were under the marble of a sepulchre, the soul enveloped, and covered up, and retaining all its features cold and dry, but separated from the eternal idea which created it; to imagine in the light of God what this soul would be if it were alive; to feel one's heart become moved and agitated, as Jesus at the tomb of Lazarus; to utter a cry to God, to receive from Him power, to send forth a burning breath, to enwrap, to penetrate with vivifying flames the dead or sleeping soul; suddenly to catch its look, which at first does not understand you, to see its resurrection, its life,

its movements; presently, after a mysterious travail in God, to feel that one bears this soul in one's own soul, as a mother her infant; O Lord, this power of raising from the dead which Thou givest to those who consent to die, is it not a sufficiently magnificent reward for the sacrifice?

#### 'INTERCESSION.'

We think that that which public opinion honoured first in M. Vianney was his immense power of intercession; those hands always lifted up between heaven and earth to draw forth the benedictions of the one, and the confidence of the other; those supplications ever active, ever fervent, those torrents of tears unceasingly shed at the feet of God, who desires that we should entreat Him and move Him thus.—'Monnin, Le Curé d'Ars,' ii., 11.

## DELIVERY.

BISHOP WILSON.

We must speak to the heart as well as to the understanding. While we attack men's reason only, they will hear with patience; but when we attack the heart and its corruption, then they are uneasy. I would rather send away a hearer smiting his breast, than please the most learned audience with a fine sermon against any vice. Let people feel that you are in earnest, that you believe and are deeply affected with the great truths you would recommend. Avoid such discourses and subjects as would divert the mind without instructing it. — 'Sacra Privata,' p. 233.

## SYMPATHY.

A. P. STANLEY.

Sympathy is the secret of power. No artificial self-adaptation, no mere official or pastoral interest has

an influence equal to that which is produced by the consciousness of a human and personal affection in the mind of the teacher towards his scholars, of the general towards his soldiers, of the apostle towards his converts.—‘Corinthians,’ 362.

### THE EFFICACY OF LOVE.

‘S. FRANCIS DE SALES.

Be always as gentle and loving as possible, and bear in mind that you will catch more flies with a spoonful of honey than with a hundred barrels of vinegar. If you must err in one extreme, let it be in that of gentleness.—‘L’Esprit,’ i., 4.

### ELOQUENCE.

It is much less by the allurements and tricks of language than by all that life of the human word, by all that fire which issues from the

heart and eyes of an apostle, by that divine grace which the works of faith and love cause to superabound in the spirit of the saints, and which they shed abroad upon their hearers, that the Curé d'Ars reached men's souls, that he enlightened them, that he touched them, and transformed them. One word, one single word issuing from the mouth of this holy priest wrought in an instant miracles which all the books and all the sermons would never have wrought.  
—'Monnin, Le Curé d'Ars,' ii., 193.

## DELIVERY.

Assuredly the eloquence of the Curé d'Ars was not in his speech. Although only a short distance from him, I was scarcely able to hear him, for independently of the weakness of his exhausted voice, the complete loss of his teeth had robbed his

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enunciation of all distinctness. But he was eloquent by his countenance, by his gesture, but above all by the authority of his life, and the influence of his work. But what a powerful influence he exercised upon his audience! That was the last scene and the most beautiful of all. The multitude was massed around him. At his feet, on the steps of the altar, on the pavement of the choir, thronged persons of every age, and rank, and sex; above all, women with their infants, all absorbed in a rapt attention, the neck strained, the eyes fixed upon his person. If it was impossible to hear him, it was sufficient to see him, for his outward appearance conveyed everything, so much expression had he in his gesture, in his eyes, and in all his countenance. He shivered with horror in speaking of sin; he wept in thinking of offences committed

against God; he appeared ravished when he occupied himself with the love of God; he became red and pale alternately. His utterance was besides copious and fluent. He spoke to us of the end of man, which is happiness in God. Sin banishes from God; repentance and penance bring back to God. This was his theme day after day: he unfolded it with his heart. I repeat, you heard very little, but you felt it all.—‘Monnier, Le Curé d’Ars,’ ii., 48, 49.

## COMPASSION.

The Curé d’Ars saw, every day, and all day long, pass before his eyes those endless successions of difficulties and misfortunes, those various forms of the world, of which sadness is always the root. His soul was grievously affected thereby, and when the evening came, when he

found himself in his room, amongst the missionaries, he used to give vent to all his feelings; he burst into tears. ‘You must come to Ars,’ he used to say, ‘to know what sin is, to judge of the harm that Adam has done to his poor family. One knows not what to do; one can only weep and pray.’—‘Monnin, Le Curé d’Ars,’ ii., 27.

#### THE ATTRACTIVE POWER OF KINDNESS.

Saint Francis de Sales remarks that kindness is one of the foundations of renown. People began to say in the neighbourhood how the Curé d’Ars was gentle towards the guilty, patient towards the scrupulous, indulgent towards the weak, compassionate towards the unfortunate, helpful towards all. The sinners came to find this kind

priest who welcomed them with tears ; the poor ran towards his bountiful hands, which had nothing to give, and were always giving ; the afflicted knew that his lips were an abundant source of light and comfort ; those who were agitated with doubt knew that those lips gave a victorious power to truth. The just came also, for his heart was a furnace of love at which all hearts warmed themselves.—‘ Monnin, Le Curé d’Ars,’ ii., 8.

## A SINGLE LOOK.

M arvellous effect of a single look. Our Lord, says the evangelist, looked at two brothers, Simon and Andrew, and this look wrought in them eternal salvation. He saw a man at his office desk, and that look penetrated the heart of the publican Matthew. He looked upon Saint

Peter, and the faithless apostle, recognising his fault, went out and wept bitterly. The saints are gifted with the same look; bearing Jesus Christ in their soul, they bear Him in their eyes, which are the mirror of the soul.—‘Monnin, Le Curé d’Ars,’ ii., 202.

#### THE ANALYSIS OF ZEAL.

SPURGEON.

I sat down in an arm-chair, wearied with my work. My toil had been severe and protracted. Many were seeking the pearl of great price, and many had found what they sought. The church wore an aspect of thrift and prosperity, and joy and hope and courage were the prevailing sentiments on every hand. As for myself, I was joyous in my work. My brethren were united. My sermons and exhortations were

evidently telling on my hearers; my church was crowded with listeners. The whole community was more or less moved with the prevailing excitement, and as the work went on I had been led into exhausting labours for its promotion. Fired with my work, I soon lost myself in a sort of half-forgetful state, though I seemed fully aware of my place and my surroundings. Suddenly a stranger entered the room, without any preliminary 'tap' or 'come in.' I saw in his face benignity, intelligence, and weight of character; but though he was passably well attired, he carried, suspended about his person, measures, and chemical agents and implements, which gave him a very strange appearance.

The stranger came toward me, and extending his hand, said: 'How is your zeal?' I supposed when he

began his question that the inquiry was to be for my health, but was pleased to hear his final word; for I was well pleased with my zeal, and doubted not the stranger would smile when he should know its proportions. Instantly I conceived of it as a physical quantity, and put my hand into my bosom, and brought it forth and presented it to him for inspection. He took it, and placing it in his scale, weighed it carefully. I heard him say, 'One hundred pounds!' I could scarcely suppress an audible note of satisfaction; but I caught his earnest look, as he noted down the weight, and I saw at once that he had drawn no final conclusion, but was intent on pushing his investigation. He broke the mass to atoms, and put the crucible into the fire. When it was thoroughly fused he took it out and set it down to cool. It congealed in

cooling, and when turned out on the hearth exhibited a series of layers or strata, which all, at the touch of the hammer, fell apart, and were severally tested and weighed, the stranger making minute notes as the process went on. When he had finished he presented the notes to me, and gave me a look of mingled sorrow and compassion, as, without a word, except 'May God save you,' he left the room. I opened the notes and read as follows:

ANALYSIS OF THE ZEAL OF JUNIUS, A CANDIDATE  
FOR A CROWN OF GLORY:

Weight in mass...	... ... ...	100 lbs.
Of this, on analysis, there proves to be—		
Bigotry ...	... .. ...	10 parts
Personal ambition	... • ...	23 "
Love of salary ...	... ...	19 "
Pride of denomination...	... ...	15 "
Pride of talent ...	... • ...	14 "
Love of authority	... • ...	12 "
Love to God { ...	... • ...	4 "
Love to Man { ...	... • ...	3 "
		<hr/>
		100

That day was the crisis of my history; and if there shall prove to have been, in dater years, some depth and earnestness in my convictions, and some searching and saving pungency in my words, I doubt not eternity will show their connection with the visit of the Searcher of hearts, at whose coming my sins went to judgment beforehand, and I was weighed in the balance and found wanting.—*Sword and Trowel*

## A DREAM.

ANON.

A clergyman had a dream. He thought the judgment-day was come, and that there was, as it were, a great visitation—greater than the Bishop's. The clergy were mustering, and appeared in their gowns, but instead of being alone, they had part of their congregations with them. Some had a few followers,

others had none, and some a great many ; and all these received a gracious smile from the Judge when their names were called. The clergyman who dreamed was waiting, as he supposed, with a large number of people at his back. When his turn came he went forward ; but, as he approached, he saw that the Judge's countenance was sad and dark. In a sudden impulse of suspicion he looked back ; and lo ! there was no one behind him. He stopped, not daring to go any further, and turning to look at the Judge, saw that His countenance was full of wrath. This dream had such an effect upon him, that he began to attend to his parish and care for the souls of his people.



